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Model Rocket Launches at the NASA Visitor Center

March 1st marks the beginning of the annual model rocket season at NASA Wallops Flight Facility's Visitor Center. For nearly 25 years, the staff at the Visitor Center has been routinely launching an assortment of low power model rockets for public viewing.

On the first Saturday of each month, from March to November, and the first and second Saturday in July and August, visitors can watch 5 – 10 rockets fire from a multi-rail launcher to altitudes up to 500 feet. Up to 300 people have come out to watch the launches.

The models are usually made of paper, plastic and/or balsa wood and use solid fuel motors. In addition to those built by the Visitor Center staff, visitors are encouraged to participate by bringing their own launch-ready rockets, up to size D motor.

Summertime also brings more launches with the return of the Virginia Space Flight Academy students. During the week-long camps, participants build their own one and two-stage rockets to launch at the Visitor Center. Each week campers typically launch 25 to 35 rockets and the public is encouraged to come and cheer them on!

Because of the Visitor Center's proximity to the Wallops airfield, launches may be postponed or cancelled due to airport operations. Launches are also cancelled for inclement weather, including winds exceeding 18 miles per hour.

All programs at the Visitor's Center are free to the public, and there is no admission fee. For more information on the model rocket launches call the Visitor Center at 757-824-2298.

The Visitor Center, part of the Robert L. Krieger Education Complex, is located on Route 175 about six miles from Route 13 and five miles from Chincoteague, VA.

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